

ISRAEL-LEBANON TASK FORCE
Situation Report #19
(As of 1600 EDT, 17 June 1982)

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Israeli Casualty Figures

Israeli casualty figures are climbing as the number of dead and wounded is verified. An IDF spokesman today announced total Israeli losses of 214 killed, 1,114 wounded, and 23 missing.

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Lebanese Internal Developments

President Sarkis continued his efforts to form a National Salvation Committee today, meeting with Druze chief Walid Junblat, who arrived in Beirut from his home in Israeli-held territory in the company of Ambassadors Habib and Dillon. Press reports suggest that Junblat, has now been given approval from the leftist National Movement to participate on the committee, but reports after his meeting with Sarkis claimed that he is still opposed. Some reports indicated that Junblat is also seeking approval from PLO leader Yasir Arafat and that he is continuing to hold out for the appointment of additional Maronites besides his Phalange rival, Bashir Jumayyil. Junblat's continued reluctance is more likely based on suspicions that the committee will be induced to agree to Israeli conditions on the status of the PLO.

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We cannot confirm a Radio Monte Carlo report from Damascus that Sarkis asked Syrian President Assad today to withdraw Syrian troops in the Arab Deterrent Force from Beirut and the surrounding area. The report alleged that Assad denied the request on the grounds that Syrian troops were governed by an Arab League mandate and that Sarkis was acting under Israeli pressure.

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Status of PLO

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The Palestinians are prepared to fight hard against a direct Israeli ground assault on West Beirut. The PLO emerged from its mauling in southern Lebanon with its leadership and its organizational integrity intact. Its forces probably have sufficient ammunition to put up a strong resistance to an Israeli attack. They appear confident they can force the Israelis to pay a high price in house-to-house fighting.

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Arab Reactions

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In Egypt, two opposition parties held a rally on 15 June to demonstrate their support of Palestinian and leftist forces in Lebanon. They urged President Mubarak to break relations with Tel Aviv.

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